

Message Text

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P R 041740Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8287

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY R

EC 1121

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 1433

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SOCI, SP, VT

SUBJECT: PASTORAL AND POSSIBLE EXPULSION BASQUE BISHOP HEIGHTEN
CHURCH STATE TENSIONS

REF MADRID 1370

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. DISPUTE OVER BISHIP ANOVEROS AND PASTORAL LETTER READ AT CHURCHES FEB 24 CALLING FOR MORE FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY FOR BASQUE PEOPLE (REFTEL), HAS RAPIDLY DEGENERATED INTO ONE OF MOST SERIOUS CRISES IN CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS IN RECENT YEARS. GOVERNMENT STRENOUSLY SEEKING OBTAIN VATICAN APPROVAL TO EXPEL ANOVEROS, ALTHOUGH IT UNLIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS OBJECTIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. ANOVEROS REMAINS UNDER HOUSE ARREST AT HIS BILBAO RESIDENCE, AS DOES VICAR GENERAL MSGR. UBIETA. GOS HAS TERMED HOUSE ARREST IS MERELY "PROTECTIVE CUSTODY" FOR BISHOP'S OWN PROTECTION AND CLAIMS ANOVEROS IS NOT BEING DETAINED. LATTER DISTINCTION IS BECAUSE GOS, UNDER TERMS 1953 CONCORDAT, WOULD HAVE TO HAVE PERMISSION OF VATICAN TO ARREST BISHOP, OR TO BRING ANOVEROS TO TRIAL.

3. GOS HAS BEEN TRYING TO PERSUADE ANOVEROS TO LEAVE COUNTRY
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AND HAS HAD PLANE STANDING BY IN BILBAO DURING PAST TWO DAYS

TO TAKE HIM INTO EXILE IN PORTUGAL OR ITALY, BUT ANOVEROS HAS REFUSED. GOS' EFFORTS TO EXILE BISHOP ALSO COME UP AGAINST CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT VATICAN MUST GRANT PERMISSION BEFORE BISHOP CAN BE EXILED OR OTHERWISE FORCIBLY TRANSFERRED.

4. ON MAR 3 GOS ISSUED STATEMENT RE SITUATION IN WHICH IT STATED GOS HAD MADE VARIOUS PRIOR EFFORTS TO GET ANOVEROS TO WITHDRAW HIS APPROVAL OF PASTORAL BEFORE IT WAS READ; HAD APPEALED TO THE PAPAL NUNCIO; HAD EMPHASIZED THAT PASTORAL CONTAINED GRAVE THREATS TO SPAIN'S NATIONAL UNITY(ALTHOUGH GOS HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY ATTACKING PASTORAL IN PRESS, IT HAS NOT ALLOWED TEXT TO BE PUBLISHED); HAD OFFERED PLANE TO TRANSPORT ANOVEROS TO TRANSPORT ANOVEROS TO ROME WHICH OFFER BISHOP HAD REFUSED; AND THAT GOS WAS IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH VATICAN TO SEEK TO FIND SOLUTION TO IMPASSE. STATEMENT ALSO SCORES ANOVEROS FOR BLOCKING GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION OF TERRORIST BOMB PLOT BEING HATCHED ON CHURCH PREMISES.

5. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN CASE INCLUDED DEPARTURE MAR 2 OF PAPAL NUNCIO FOR ROME WHERE HE REMAINS AT PRESENT; REPORTED DISCUSSION OF CASE AT LAST TWO CABINET MEETINGS, DEMONSTRATION BY SUPPORTERS OF BISHOP OUTSIDE HIS BILBAO RESIDENCE WHICH DISPERSED BY POLICE, AND REPORTED MEETINGS OF MADRID CARDINAL TARA- NCON LAST WEEK WITH JUSTICE MINISTER RUIZ JARABO AND TODAY OF CARDINAL PRIMATE GONZALEZ MARTIN OF TOLEDO WITH GENERAL FRANCO ON SUBJECT.

6. COMMENT: PASTORAL, WHICH WAS ACTUALLY DRAFTED BY VARIOUS MEMBERS OF BASQUE CLERGY AND APPROVED FOR ISSUANCE BY ANOVEROS, APPEARS HAVE BEEN PRODUCT OF INTENSE PRESSURES BY BASQUE CLRGY UPON THEIR BISHOP TO SPEAK OUT ON BEHALF OF BASQUES AT TIME WHEN RATHER STIFF REPRESSIVE MEASURES HAVE BEEN IN FORCE IN BASQUE PROVINCES EVER SINCE PRESUMED BASQUE ETA TERRORISTS ASSASSINATED LATE PRIME MINISTER CARRERO BALNCO DECEMBER 20.

7. MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE ANOVEROS PASTORAL HAS PRODUCED EXCESSIVELY HARSH GOVERNMENT REACTION. ONE SOURCE CLAIMED THAT COMPARABLE PASTORAL, IF READ IN ANY OTHER PART OF SPAIN OUTSIDE BASQUE COUNTRY, EVEN INCLUDING CATALONIA, WOULD NOT HAVE PRECIPITATED SAME STIFF GOS REACTION, BUT THAT GOS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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CURRENT MOOD AND IN WAKE OF BASQUE TERRORIST ASSASSINATION OF CARRERO BLANCO IS ULTRA-SENSITIVE AND DETERMINED TO CRACK DOWN HARD ON EVEN SLIGHTEST EXPRESSION BASQUE DISSENT.

8. REPORTEDLY THERE MAY BE ANOTHER REASON BEHIND GOVERNMENT'S TOUGH

REACTION. ONE JESUIT SOURCE TOLD LABATT THAT RECENTLY A LITTLE

KNOWN EPISODE REGARDING A MADRID CHURCH SCHOOL REACHED ALL THE WAY TO THE CABINET AND WAS CONSIDERED AT FEB 22 CABINET MEETING. ACCORDING SOURCE, MINISTER SUBSECRETARY OF PRESIDENCY CARRO MARTINEZ, A CLOSE COLLABORATOR OF PRIME MINISTER ARIAS WHO SERVED WITH THE LATTER IN INTERIOR MINISTRY, RECENTLY BECAME INCENSED WHEN HE LEARNED LORETO COLLEGE, MADRID NUN'S SCHOOL HIS DAUGHTER ATTENDS, WAS TEACHING STUDENTS "DANGEROUS THINGS" E.G. FRANCO SPAIN WAS A DICTATORSHIP, LIBERAL DEMOCRACY WAS GOOD, AND SCHOOL WAS GIVING CLASSES IN SEXUAL EDUCATION. CARRO MARTINEZ AND OTHER PARENTS, INCLUDING A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF RIGHTIST BLAS PINAR, HAVE LAUNCHED CAMPAIGN AGAINST SCHOOL AND ITS DANGEROUS PROGRESSIVE TENDENCIES AND CARRO IMPRESSED MAJORITY OF CABINET THAT CLERGY WERE CARRYING THINGS TOO FAR WITH SUBERSIVE AND PORNOGRAPHIC TEACHING. CURRENT STATUS IN LORETO COLLEGE CASE IS THAT AUTHORITIES HAVE REPORTEDLY GIVEN SCHOOL AN ULTIMATUM IT MUST FIRE TWO OF ITS NUN TEACHERS, SCHOOL CHAPLAIN, AND ANOTHER PRIEST TEACHER, OTHERWISE THEY HAVE THREATENED CLOSE DOWN SCHOOL. IN THIS CLIMATE SOURCE FELT CARRO, PERHAPS ONE OF MOST INFLUENTIAL FIGURES IN NEW CABINET, WAS HELPING TO LEAD RENEWED CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHURCH IN CABINET AND MAY ALSO BE SPEARHEADING ANTI-ANOVEROS DRIVE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MADRID 1433

9. IT IS UNCERTAIN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ANOVEROS. IT IS CLEAR, DESPITE GOS EFFORTS TO GET HIM TO LEAVE VOLUNTARILY, ANOVEROS WILL NOT DO SO. MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE IT VERY UNLIKELY VATICAN

WILL GIVE IN TO GOS PRESSURES TO TRANSFER ANOVEROS ABROAD, BECAUSE THIS WOULD THEN PRECIPITATE A SERIOUS CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE IN VATICAN, ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT DISCOUNT ENTIRELY THIS POSSIBILITY.

10. ONLY PRECEDENT OF TRANSFER OF BISHOP DURING FRANCO ERA UNDER GOS PRESSURE WAS REPORTEDLY IN EARLY 1940'S WHEN VATICAN ACCEDED TO TRANSFER BISHOP OF CALAHORA FOR HAVING PUBLISHED ANTI-NAZI ENCYCLICAL OF POPE IN HIS DIOCESE. MORE RECENT COMPARABLE CASE WAS IN 1963 WHEN VATICAN AGREED TO TRANSFER TO ENFORCED RETIREMENT IN FRANCE CONTROVERSIAL ABBOT ESCARRE OF MONTSERRAT. HOWEVER, BOTH THESE CASES PRECEDED VATICAN II AND ACCESSION TO POWER OF LIBERAL MAJORITY IN SPANISH EPISCOPATE.

11. IT POSSIBLE GOS MIGHT SIMPLY FORCIBLY EXPEL OR IMPRISON ANOVEROS WITHOUT APPROVAL OF VATICAN AND IN DEFIANCE OF CONCORDAT, ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD CERTAINLY CAUSE SERIOUS RUPTURE CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS.

12. ONE POSSIBLE COMPROMISE SOLUTION MIGHT BE FOR VATICAN TO SECRETLY AND INFORMALLY AGREE TRANSFER ANOVEROS TO SOME OTHER CONFIDENTIAL

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DIOCESE OR JOB SEVERAL MONTHS HENCE ONCE CURRENT FUROR HAS DIED DOWN, SO THAT IT DID NOT APPEAR VATICAN WAS ACTING UNDER GOS PRESSURE.

13. ANOVEROS EPISODE HAS CAUSED MAJOR STRAIN IN CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, AND ALL CERTAINLY HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECT ON SUCH THINGS AS THE LONG-STALLED CONCORDAT NEGOTIATIONS. IT ALSO RUNS RISK OF CAUSING PERIOD OF OPEN CONFRONTATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND GOS.

14. ANOVEROS EPISODE, WHATEVER ITS OUTCOME, HAS ALSO HAD EFFECT OF BRINGING TO HALT A CERTAIN CAUTIOUS BUT POSITIVE RAPPROCHEMENT WHICH EPISCOPATE HAD BEEN SEEKING TO EFFECT WITH NEW GOVERNMENT IN WAKE ILL-FEELING WHICH HAD EXISTED UNDER CARRERO GOVERNMENT. LEADING ARCHITECT OF THIS RAPPROCHEMENT HAD BEEN CARDINAL TARANCON WHO HAS BEEN PLAYING A MODERATING ROLE. ACCORDING SOME SOURCES AN INFORMAL AGREEMENT HAD BEEN CLOSE TO BEING REACHED BETWEEN GOS AND EPISCOPATE AS BASIS FOR CONCORDAT REVISION, BUT ANOVEROS' CASE HAS PROBABLY DESTROYED BASIS FOR THIS ARRANGEMENT.

15. ALTHOUGH BASQUE CLERGY APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY BEHIND ANOVEROS, EPISCOPATE AT NATIONAL LEVEL HAD SERIOUS MISGIVINGS ABOUT HIS PASTORAL AND TARANCON AND OTHER LEADING PRELATES REPORTEDLY TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO DISSUADE HIM FROM PROCEEDING WITH CONTROVERSIAL PASTORAL, THE TIMING OF WHICH THEY TOLD HIM WOULD BE EXTREMELY "INOPPORTUNE".

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